

Partnership Evaluation: Methods and Madness

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are those of the speaker and do not necessarily
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Kinds of evaluation

- Process vs. Outcome
- Qualitative vs. Quantitative



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Keeping the end product in mind

- Who is your audience?
- What do you need to get out of the evaluation?
- Will you want to publish the results?
 - ◆ If so, where? How?



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Reasons for evaluating

- To find out what's going to happen (hypothesis refinement)
- To test an existing hypothesis
- To determine whether proven methods are being used properly



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The ideal evaluation...

- ...depends on your audience and your purpose for evaluating!



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The ideal evaluation - Research

- Quantitative
- Controls
- Randomized
- Baseline, pre- and post- data



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Researchers - Why have the ideal evaluation?

- to prove worth to scientifically-oriented grant provider
- to prove cost-effectiveness in business model



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The ideal evaluation - Utilitarian

- issues-centric
- results are applicable to real-world problems
- often qualitative



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Utilitarians – Why have the ideal evaluation?

- want to pull at heartstrings, persuade with real-life examples
- focus on things that numbers can't tell, more details



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The ideal evaluation - the happy medium

- Satisfies both research and
utilitarian needs



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The state of the literature

- Some resources are available, particularly for process improvements
 - ◆ *Granner & Sharpe, 2003*
 - ★ <http://prevention.sph.sc.edu/tools/CoalitionEvalInvent.pdf>
- We still have a very long way to go



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Evaluation Troubleshooting

Common issues, and how to resolve them



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The monsters in the closet - Lurking Variables

- As ice cream sales rise, so does the rate of drownings. Therefore, eating ice cream causes drowning.

In our world, the biggest issue is teasing out what part of outcome is due specifically to the partnership, versus due to environment/intervention!



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The monsters in the closet - Resources

- We are often plagued with a lack of staff, funding, and knowledge
- Use what you already know – collaboration is key!
 - ◆ Local colleges & universities
 - ◆ Cooperative extensions



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The monsters in the closet - Metrics

- How does one measure an abstract concept?
- How can we “compare apples to oranges”?



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The monsters in the closet – Sampling

- Convenience samples
- Representative vs. Random sampling



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The monsters in the closet - Bias

- Self-fulfilling prophecy
- Instruments – leading questions?
- Objective numbers and subjective interpretation



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Ending on a happy note

- Evaluating can be scary...
...BUT it is also a growth opportunity for a partnership.
- Problems are surmountable.
- We strive for perfection...
...and though nothing is perfect, we exceed our wildest expectations in the process.



You can do it!



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